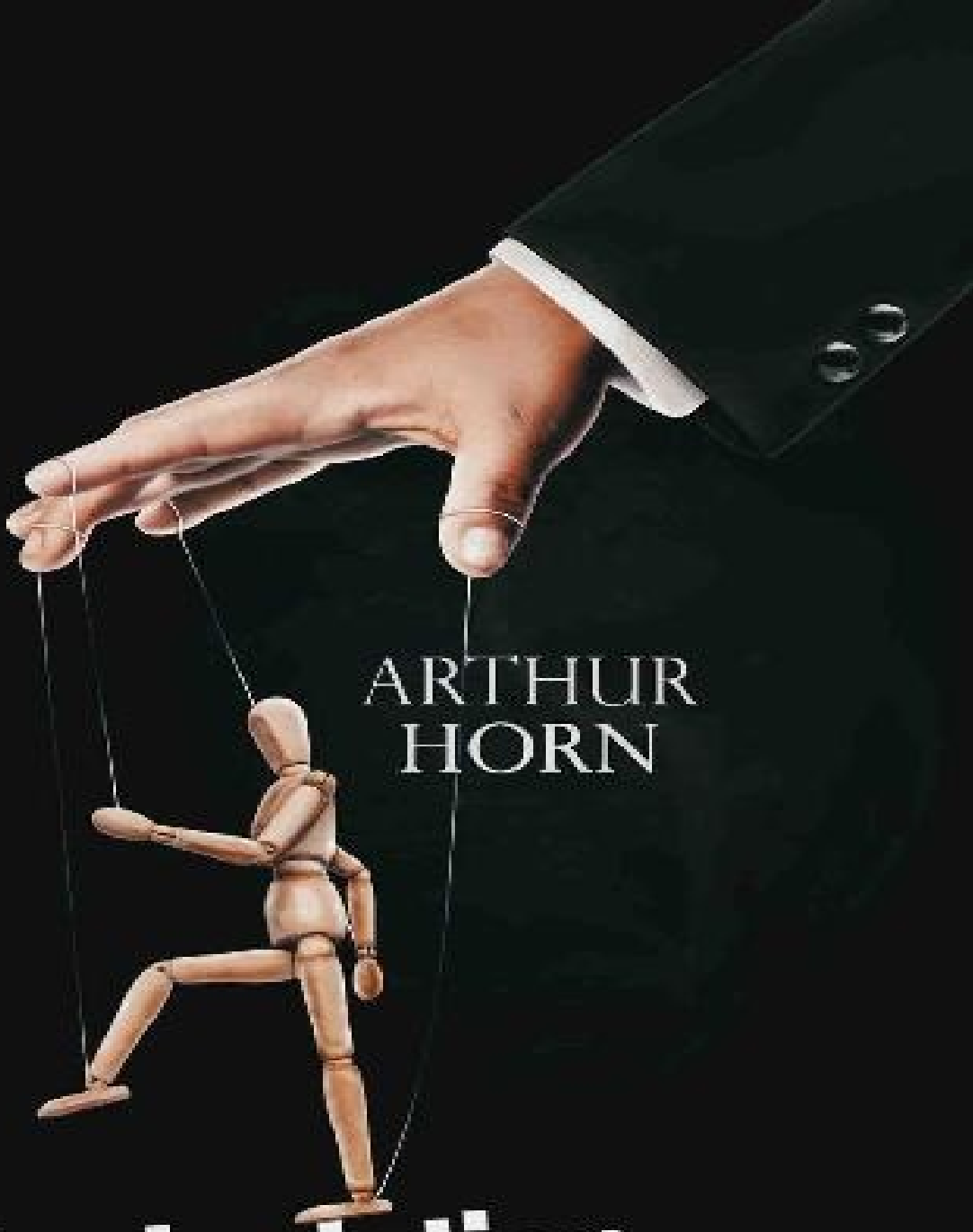

ARTHUR HORN

Manipulation

DARK PSYCHOLOGY TO MANIPULATE AND CONTROL PEOPLE

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

MANIPULATION

LEGAL NOTICE

Copyright (c) 2019 Arthur Horn.

All rights are reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced or duplicated using any form whether mechanical, electronic, or otherwise. No portion of this book may be transmitted, stored in a retrieval database, or otherwise made available in any manner whether public or private unless specific permission is granted by the publisher. Vector illustration credit: vecteezy.com This book does not offer advice, but merely provides information. The author offers no advice whether medical, financial, legal, or otherwise, nor does the author encourage any person to pursue any specific course of action discussed in this book. This book is not a substitute for professional advice. The reader accepts complete and sole responsibility for the manner in which this book and its contents are used. The publisher and the author will not be held liable for any damages caused.

Manipulation

Dark Psychology to Manipulate and Control People

By: Arthur Horn

Contents

- Introduction
- What Is Manipulation?
  - Basic Ideas
  - Manipulation Vs Influence
  - Manipulation Vs Persuasion
  - Defining Manipulation
- Examples of Manipulation
  - Advertising
  - Military Strategy
  - The Professional World
  - Personal Relationships
- Advantages of Manipulation
  - Achieve Your Goals
  - Help Others
  - Guard Yourself Against the Manipulation of Others
- Manipulation Fundamentals
  - Goals
    - Your Goals
    - The Goals of Others
    - Actions
  - Tools
    - Power
    - Persuasion
    - Deception
  - Irrational Behavior
  - Manifestations of Manipulation
    - The Carrot and the Stick

- Emotional Manipulation
- Charisma

Ethical Considerations

- Deception
- Abuse
- Honor
- The Ends Vs The Means
- Intent and Unscrupulousness
- The Law

Methodology

- Step 1 – Define Your Goal(s)
- Step 2 – Map Out Your Paths to Success
- Step 3 – Gather Information
- Step 4 – Identify Opportunities and Threats
  - Opportunities
  - Threats
- Step 5 – Take Action
- Step 6 – Learn and Improve

Analysis

- Self-Analysis
- Analyzing Others
- Cold Reading

Body Language

- Facial Expressions
- Reading Body Language

Introduction

This book explores the theory of manipulation by breaking down manipulation into its component parts, forming useful, objective definitions and offering practical advice for manipulating others.

The first part of the book is primarily concerned with introducing ideas and explaining them, in order to form a grounding for the practical sections of the book later on. It is important to remember that much of the information is general, because effective manipulation requires actions which are situation specific. Rather than telling you what to do, this book will give you the ability to form effective manipulation strategies, whatever your goals and situation.

Examples are included to provide context to some of the general advice in the book, illustrating how to apply the knowledge in a practical sense.

In addition, the book covers areas relevant to forming and executing effective manipulation strategies, including analysis, cold reading and body language. The book does not define manipulation as something inherently bad, despite its negative connotations. Ethical issues surrounding manipulation are addressed in a dedicated chapter.

After reading the book, you can expect to have greater insight into your own actions and the actions of others. You will have a strong grounding in the mechanics of manipulation, allowing you to make your own decisions about manipulating others, and recognize when others are manipulating you.

Unlike many charlatans, who claim to have shortcuts to recognize when people are lying, and make others bend to your every command, this book is honest about its limitations and recommends caution where it is sensible.

What Is Manipulation?

It of primary importance to establish a clear definition of manipulation for the purposes of this book. Without understanding exactly what constitutes manipulation, there will be a great deal of difficulty in separating instances of manipulation and other forms of influence.

While you probably have your own idea of what counts as manipulation, it is important that you adopt the book’s definition, in order to make sense of the practical advice in later chapters.

Basic Ideas

In a broad sense, manipulation is the effort to affect the behavior or perception of others. Most definitions extend that to include “via the use of abusive, deceptive or otherwise exploitative means” or something similar, as a means of differentiating between manipulation and other influencing behaviors, such as persuasion.

That raises even more questions, such as what constitutes “exploitative”. Deception is relatively easy to define as a willful concealment or alteration of the truth. But does deception really preclude persuasion?

At a job interview, you probably won’t mention the times you came in late to work at your previous job due to hangovers; is that manipulation? You could argue that anyone hiring for a job is already operating on the understanding that people are likely to highlight their positive traits, and draw attention away from the negatives. In that sense, it isn’t necessarily dishonest to omit certain information in that situation. So expectation can also play a part in determining the ethics of manipulation and where the line is drawn between manipulation and other forms of influence.

Putting ethics aside for now, there is another word, in that broad definition, worthy of attention. Defining manipulation as an “effort” suggests that manipulation is still manipulation regardless of success or failure – the act of manipulation is defined as the *attempt*. Ironically, those least successful at manipulating others, who are most frequently discovered, are more likely to gain a reputation as manipulative than those who succeed.

You can probably point to someone in your orbit, a relative or co-worker perhaps, who you consider to be manipulative. Yet, consider how others view them. Are they well known as a manipulator? Does this impact their success? The answer to this, too, may be complicated. If someone is considered by their peers at work to be manipulative and yet holds sway over the boss, they might still be judged successful. When thinking about manipulating others, it’s important to define clear goals. This will allow you to make rational, objective decisions, which is key to success.

At this point, there are too many questions and too few answers. The remainder of this chapter will tie up some loose ends, and establish a definition that will

give bearing for the rest of the book.

Manipulation Vs Influence

The modern world has adopted the term *influencer* for people with a large social media following, capable of *influencing* others with their content. It doesn't take a particularly critical mind to recognize the source of this term as advertising. As consumer behavior evolves, advertisers have taken note and increasingly look to harness the power of *influencers* to gain attention for products. This is done variously through paid or unpaid sponsorships, promotional deals and agreements.

In some cases, *influencers* disclose these agreements while, in others, they don't. Ethical questions are again raised, particularly if an *influencer* is ostensibly just a happy consumer but secretly on the payroll of the company which sells the product.

Surely this whole moral quandary could have been avoided, if advertisers instead coined the term *manipulator*! Yet it's hardly surprising that they didn't. What this highlights is that, although people expect advertisers to be manipulative, it is still unthinkable that they would admit to it. Instagram stars happily list themselves as *influencer* on their profile page with seemingly no negative connotations.

But the goals of many *influencers*, especially those who work with advertisers, are fundamentally manipulative. It's not even a grey-area issue. *Influencers* aim to shift products to their followers in order to make money. It is not possible to know if everyone they influence would benefit from the product, nor is it possible to know their financial situation or any specific circumstances. In this case, the *influencer* is putting their own interests first.

Manipulation does not necessarily include an attempt to harm others. However, it must, to some degree, place one's own goals and interests first. This is part of the puzzle.

Additionally, it is safest and most logical to refer to influence as a parent term of manipulation; one which includes manipulation and other methods of influence, such as inspiration and emulation.

Manipulation Vs Persuasion

These terms might seem diametrically opposed, with persuasion acting as the "honest" form of manipulation, where the actor is up front about their goals and opinions. However, for the purposes of this book, it will be more useful to consider persuasion as a tier below manipulation.

Persuasion, then, becomes a method of manipulation, which is a form of influence. Persuasion also happens to be one of the less effective methods of manipulation. How often have you been in a debate with someone else, only for them to hold up their hands and say "I concede, you are absolutely right"? It is probably possible for you to count these instances on one hand.

It may be easy to persuade someone that smoking is unhealthy but is it easy to persuade them to quit? If it were so, governments wouldn't see the need or benefit in placing heavy taxes on tobacco products in order to discourage use. According to this book's definition, the government is trying to manipulate the consumption of tobacco and using a range of methods, including persuasion, to achieve that end.

So what about other forms of influence? And other methods of manipulation? Well, manipulation needs to have intent and it ought to have some form of goal – even if that goal is just to create anarchy. A great filmmaker may influence the work of many others but it is clearly distinct from manipulation. The filmmaker doesn't set out to influence others (although they may), rather they achieve influence through the reaction of others to their work, resulting in inspiration and even emulation.

Persuasion, likewise, is not the only method of manipulation one could employ. An easy alternative is lying, a form of deception. To lie and to be believed will inevitably change the perception of those who believe the lie. As has already been established, it is still manipulation whether it is successful or not.

Persuasion, like influence, doesn't suffer from quite the same image problem as manipulation. In fact it's seen as a positive thing to be able to make a "persuasive argument." Although it does have a sinister tinge; the phrase "I can be very persuasive" implies some exertion of power over another party – possibly even an abuse. Also, when employers refer to the soft skill of "persuasion," it is correct to understand this as a euphemism for manipulation.

At least in part.

Defining Manipulation

Concluding this chapter, it is now possible to create a suitable and helpful definition of manipulation for the purposes of this book.

Manipulation is a form of intentional influence, characterized as an attempt, by a person or party (the manipulator), to change the behavior of another person or party (the target), typically with a view to achieving a goal in the manipulator's interests.

There is no nefarious implication, nor is it specified whether or not the manipulator is acting *in*, *against*, or *with no regard for* the interests of the *target*. All are possible. This achieves a definition of manipulation which is not constrained by subjective ethical ideas. Although that doesn't mean you should abandon your morals as well!

This definition is useful because it is objective and clear. Also, it is helpful because, in this book, you will learn techniques for manipulation that will help you to achieve your goals. In that respect, it would be a mistake to exclude persuasion, which absolutely can play an important role in manipulation and is inextricable from the advice in this book.

Two problems remain, however. The first relates to "intended influence." Intent is difficult because it implies responsibility. In actual fact, everyone manipulates everyone around them all the time, even from a young age. It would be wrong to exclude a child's temper tantrum from the umbrella of manipulation, just because they aren't old enough to rationalize their behavior. The same applies to adult temper tantrums, for that matter. Intent, therefore, does not imply conscious behavior – it can also be instinctive. This also allows for the, very real, presence of "naturally manipulative" persons.

The second problem is the disappointingly vague ending: "typically to achieve a goal in the manipulator's interests." Not only is it problematic to define "the manipulator's interests," there is a catch-all ambiguity in the inclusion of "typically." This part serves only to create a normalized idea of manipulation for the purposes of this book and absolutely wouldn't suit a more general definition. After all, how can someone perfectly know their own interests? It is of course possible to successfully manipulate someone, and for the result to still be one's own demise.

The latter problem is addressed during the course of the book, at points where it happens to be relevant. Despite its flaws, this definition of manipulation is sufficient for the practical parts of the book.

Examples of Manipulation

With the definition established, it is now of use to recognize some examples of manipulation. Some of these are common in everyday life, while others relate to unique or spectacular events. While this book relates primarily to personal manipulation, there is little theoretical difference between manipulation on an individual level and on a grand scale. The same principles almost always apply but the practicalities of manipulation methods, such as deception, can be more complex between, say, warring nations.

Advertising

Even the most innocuous advertising is trying to inform you, with a view to changing behavior or perception. It is, by this book's definition, manipulation. Some advertising may have positive intentions, such as adverts to raise money for charities (although the ethical practices of charities can and have also been drawn into question on many occasions) or a positive impact, such as an advert that informs you of genuine savings or advantages offered by a product or supplier.

On the more insidious end of the scale, you have advertising methods such as *influencers*, who attempt to affect your purchasing decisions by encouraging emulation of their lifestyle. There are also online adverts which are often indistinguishable from other content – even the most ethical websites normally only flag up paid ads with a small "sponsored" tag; other times, adverts may be completely undisclosed.

Advertising can manipulate by highlighting the positive features of a product or service. It is difficult to trust adverts as an accurate source of information because they are inherently biased. Techniques such as *subliminal advertising* sometimes go to extremes to drive messages about a product into your subconscious. You may have seen famous examples of sexual figures or messages woven into cocktail glasses to advertise alcohol, but that's just the tip of the ice—*cube*.

Military Strategy

History offers countless examples of military foes attempting to manipulate one another. Like in advertising, this manipulation is completely expected. If you believe in the cause for which you are fighting, it is also morally justifiable to manipulate your enemy in any way.

The Battle of Hastings (1066 AD), saw the Norman William the Conqueror (spoiler alert) invade England with his army, comprised of many mounted knights. He was met by Harold Godwinson, the recently coronated King of England at Hastings, near the English Channel. According to legend, Harold took position atop a hill and waited for the approaching invaders. William, seeing the disadvantage of fighting uphill, ordered a retreat, with the intention of luring the defenders into a pursuit. The plan was a success. Sensing victory, Harold pursued William's army down the hill and, in the process, sacrificed their advantageous position. The rest, they say, is history: William's mounted knights were able to overwhelm the largely infantry-based army of Harold and his victory thwarted his only significant opposition in England.

Although the accuracy of this account has been called into question, the lesson of the legend prevails: manipulate your enemy and you will achieve victory.

You can also find many instances of wars fought as characterizations of military leaders. Rommel, a German WWII general, was famed for his tactical brilliance in North African campaigns against allied forces, earning his nickname: "the Desert Fox." Techniques to obstruct or distort the information received, by a military adversary, follow the same principles as those you would use for another person.

It is also possible to draw parallels to games such as chess and real-time strategy video games, where successful strategies often revolve around deceiving your opponents with regards to your own intentions.

The Professional World

If you work in a company, it’s likely that you’ve been exposed to ambitious individuals whose goal is to climb the corporate ladder. Again, in the professional world, a certain level of manipulation is to be expected. This is one of the reasons that working together with personal friends can create complications, as a conflict exists in managing these two different kinds of relationships – competitive and supportive.

In professional life, you are presented with a range of different relationship paradigms. Your relationship to fellow team members will vary to that with your boss, or to those who work under you. Modern corporate structures tend to be flatter and a managerial approach that relies purely on authority is less viable than it used to be. It’s up to managers and team-leaders to “motivate” their employees. Well done if you immediately identified motivation as another form of manipulation.

This book concerns itself specifically with professional and personal relationships, so expect some relevant examples for manipulation in the workplace.

Personal Relationships

This is inevitably the most controversial arena for manipulation, yet ironically it is probably the most natural. From the moment you're born, you come preprogrammed with the ability to cry – a simple and effective way to communicate immediate needs, in order to receive care and attention.

Manipulation happens in family relationships as well as in friendships and romantic relationships.

The reason for controversy is rooted in the idea that contriving to manipulate others, in personal relationships, is something unnatural and rooted in a need for control. Although, once again, there is some grey area. It's quite normal for a parent to manipulate a child's behavior by using a system of incentives and punishments. This is normally considered to be part of a child's education and a healthy part of development, preparing a child for adulthood.

Manipulation in a romantic relationship, however, is viewed as something less than chivalrous. It conjures up the idea of an individual lying and emotionally blackmailing their partner in order disguise behavior or trap someone in a relationship. On the other side of the coin, it's plausible that people would praise manipulation, including deceit, if the end goal was to help a partner quit smoking or lose weight.

These ethical questions are addressed later in the book. For now, it's just useful to consider the different scenarios where manipulation may be present. Try examining the world around you to spot examples of manipulation and understand the mechanisms with which they operate.

Advantages of Manipulation

This chapter isn’t long. The benefits of manipulation are plainly obvious, much like the benefits of bank robbery. Successfully manipulating others is a way to impact the world around you and bend it to your will. That might sound sinister, but remember it’s extremely likely that you’re already doing it to some degree.

To differentiate between what you might already be doing and what you can learn from this book, instead interpret this chapter as the benefits of consciously, deliberately and effectively manipulating others.

Achieve Your Goals

By successfully manipulating others, you can alter their behavior, their views and possible even their goals to help further your own interests. It’s as simple as that.

Effective manipulation, however, is about improving your rate of success. It might be that everyone is manipulating the boss, to some degree, in order to get that promotion – but only one candidate is going to get the job. Working hard is a good place to start, and working effectively is even better. However, leaving it to merit alone might not get you through. How can you make it so that your boss wants to promote you, rather than anyone else? Understanding *that* will give you the edge.

Likewise, it’s one thing to tell your crush you like them, but another to be the object of their desire. Effective manipulation is about cultivating a situation where your success is the most likely (or ideally the inevitable) result.

Help Others

If you believe in a cause, you can support it by using manipulation to further its success. This can be anything from using a swear jar to stop a relative cursing, to earning support for your political party.

It’s the same as achieving your own goals but you’re transplanting the interests of someone or something else in place of your own. As stated in the definition, manipulation is a form of influence.

Guard Yourself Against the Manipulation of Others

The more you understand about manipulation, the better equipped you'll be to avoid being manipulated by others. Recognizing manipulative behaviors in other people will not only protect you against their influence, but you'll learn more about their goals, feeding your mind with information that you can use to manipulate them.

It's not hard to be aware of situations where you can expect to encounter manipulative behavior. What's more difficult is to always spot the ways in which you are being manipulated.

A key part of this is understanding the goals of other parties and how they are attempting to achieve those goals at any given moment. With this information, not only can you recognize and capitalize on the behavior of others, you can develop the ability to predict the future actions of your adversaries.

This requires emotional intelligence, as it is absolutely necessary to be able to place yourself in the shoes of your target. In developing this ability, a good place to start is by assessing your own behavior through your actions and learning to understand your choices from an objective standpoint. Doing so will require some practice, but later chapters will cover that in some detail.

Manipulation Fundamentals

Without further ado, it’s time to get into some of the crucial aspects of manipulating others. Thanks to the early chapters, you should now have the groundwork to give context to the ideas in this chapter and form a general understanding of effective approaches to manipulation.

In the chapter *Methodology*, you will learn how to use these ideas in order to form a coherent strategy that will improve your chances of successfully manipulating others, and achieving your goals.

Goals

Your Goals

Given that you're probably already manipulating the people around you to some degree, and being manipulated yourself, the first significant step in achieving effective manipulation is to understand and define your goals. Without defining goals, it's impossible to measure the effectiveness of your current manipulation efforts.

That's not to say you aren't already manipulating with some level of effectiveness. Some people are naturally more manipulative and some people are natural manipulators; however, the two don't always overlap.

Start by thinking about your actions, and your behavior around others. Consider who you view positively at work, or in your social circle, and who you view negatively. Consider, further, how you behave around different people and whether it aligns perfectly to your opinion of them. There is a good chance that it doesn't. In fact, what you are probably already doing is working to earn the good opinion of others who you believe to hold power and influence.

This is a very general approach that everyone takes in society. To use an obvious example, your behavior around your boss is probably different to that of your peers, regardless of your personal opinion of them.

You may even have a set goal, such as reaching "X" position. Otherwise, you might just be broadly trying to impress. You might even be trying to carve out an easy work-life for yourself, shedding responsibility and doing what you can to obscure your low productivity. Maybe you're acting to bring yourself closer to a co-worker in whom you are romantically interested.

These are just ideas. At the end of each day, think about your own behavior. What did you spend your day thinking about and trying to achieve? These are the goals you are naturally working towards already. When you really understand what your current motives are, you might surprise yourself.

In order to start manipulating effectively, it's time to clearly and consciously define your goals. If you've already done so, that's great. Make sure you have something with a clearly defined end point. Rather than just "do well at work," consider "earn a raise," or, even better, "earn a salary of $X per year by

MM/DD/YY.” By not only defining a goal, but a date as well, you are giving yourself the added motivation of avoiding failure.

With a clearly defined goal, you can start assessing your actions against your objective. Ask yourself “will this action help me achieve X?” and you might already be able to make smarter decisions. Don’t stop reading just yet, though! There are some important considerations to make before you suddenly change your behavior. Watch out for snakes in the grass…

The Goals of Others

While your own goals are the way to measure the success of your efforts, the goals of others are key to forming a successful manipulation strategy.

The key to manipulation is using the goals of others to further your own.

This is the most all-encompassing theory of manipulation and the core of this book's approach to manipulation.

At times, you might hold the cards and can help someone to achieve their own goals. This might be as an employee who possesses vital assets for your boss to achieve success in their role. It might be the case that you are the boss and have the power to promote people… not discounting the power you have to help those people achieve their goals by *not firing* them.

Having what it takes to help other people achieve their goals gives you inherent value to them.

Here are some examples of situations in which your goals can interact with those of another, in order to benefit you:

- Sticking with the professional field as a reference, say that one of your co-workers is put in charge of a business trip to a trade expo. Whatever their broader career goals may be at that point, it is likely that part of achieving them will be to have a successful trade expo.

  If that person has reason to believe your assets will help them to achieve that success, they are likely to take you as well. Gaining that experience will be valuable to your career, potentially raising your value as an employee and putting you in greater standing for a promotion.

  This is a simplified example to illustrate this line of thinking. It seems obvious, but by breaking it down, it's possible to make an evaluation of where you fit in to the goals someone else wants to achieve.

- It might be that your employer, whose goal is to achieve higher profits, plans to expand your division. They might decide to do

this based on the success of your division or the emergence of an expanded market for the service you provide. The knock-on effect would be an increased requirement for your labor – suddenly you've gone up in value and it might be harder for your boss to refuse offering you a raise.

For example, say that you work in a construction company, and a new technology comes into the fore, which happens to require specialist crane operation *and* you happen to be an experienced crane operator. In this case, your boss is probably looking to hire more crane operators, which takes time, potentially requires training and other investments on their part. It's likely that, even giving you a raise, your boss would still avoid cost of hiring someone new, let alone the bother.

In both of these examples, you have the power to help someone achieve their goals. This is what drives your success. There is no element of manipulation here – it is simply an analysis of how your goals can relate to those of others. The manipulation will come with cultivating these situations, by working to ensure the actions others take, to achieve their goals, align with your own.

Now, consider personal relationships. Imagine that you are romantically interested in someone else. Your ultimate goal might be to enter into a relationship with that person. All of a sudden, things get extremely complicated.

Not only is it unclear what a person might want from a relationship to you, it might be unclear even to themselves. Many people have not considered what forms the basis of their attraction to others. So if you want to effectively manipulate the situation to result in the start of your relationship together, it may be necessary for you to understand that person better than they understand themselves.

For now, just hold onto the idea as a thinking point.

Actions

Having mentioned actions frequently already, it is appropriate to dedicate a paragraph to them. Actions are the things people do. The actions of a person define their behavior. Repeated actions can be recognized in identifying behavioral patterns. An action can be anything from a facial expression, or involuntary body movement, to speech and decisions as well as acts of violence or sabotage.

Tools

Understanding goals provides the necessary information for effectively manipulating others. Tools, on the other hand, are the raw materials you have at your disposal for affecting those goals, or the actions taken by others to achieve them.

In this book, persuasion was previously referred to as a method. However, tool more accurately describes the way in which these following concepts behave – tools to effectively manipulate.

Power

In the last section, *Goals*, you read some examples relating to the workplace, specifically regarding situations in which you might be able to help someone else achieve their goals. This translates to power.

Power is the ability to help other people succeed.

This is an interesting definition because it appears to subvert the normal idea of power as an ability to exert force over others. However, breaking it down, the two are closely related. Having the ability to exert force over others can mean not harming them, not invading their country, not throwing them in jail, not creating laws which negatively impact them; these are all forms of power – the power to help other people succeed is much the same as the power to make other people fail, left unexercised.

These are just positive and negative perspectives of the same thing. The difference is often negligible.

What can you provide people that will help other people achieve their goals? The most obvious thing is extraordinary abilities. Talent is valuable in every aspect of life, from sports competitions, to business, to raising children. If you have talents that other people can use, that's a powerful thing.

Another form of power is authority. The boss gets to decide who is promoted and who is fired. A police officer can arrest you or let you off with a warning, thanks to their legally sanctioned authority. A judge may decide your sentence, based on certain constraints, and their opinion of your nature.

However, there's a problem: you might have the same, or greater, talents as another person. And yet, they may be more successful than you, held in higher regard and enjoy greater benefits.

The other aspect to power is reputation. This relates to the belief, held by others, in your power. It's reputation that is often key to manipulation. The judgment of others regarding your ability, and your authority.

Persuasion

One previously mentioned tool is persuasion. Having examined persuasion in relation to manipulation, and established it as a tool within the umbrella of manipulation, it is now worth making a comprehensive definition of persuasion and examining its use.

Persuasion is the effort to convince another person to change their actions.

The problem with persuasion alone is that, so often, it is obvious to the person that you have an incentive to convince them. They believe that you stand to gain from the persuasion, which is unhelpful when trying to manipulate a friendly or neutral party, and devastating when trying to manipulate a rival.

Persuasion is most useful when you can reveal new information to change the perception of others. If someone is likely to change their course based on new information or new understandings of information, which you can provide, persuasion then has a chance of success. This means providing information which will affect either the goals of another party, or the actions they will take to achieve them.

The only other scenario is when another party believes that your goals somehow have a positive relationship with their own. In this case, they may trust your judgment, and your intentions, and take up your cause.

This is great when you genuinely have new information, or the trust of another party. But on many occasions, you won’t. On those occasions, persuasion is only going to be effective when combined with other tools, such as deception. That means attempting to persuade someone based on a lie or partial truth. Once again, you are revealing new information or leading someone to believe your goals align with theirs, but in truth you are fabricating or hiding elements.

Deception

This is the third tool for manipulation. It forms the core of so many approaches to manipulation and interacts with both power and persuasion significantly.

Deception is the control of information.

Start thinking objectively and it becomes possible to imagine people as machines. The machines are designed to achieve goals, and will do so by reacting to inputs (information) and creating outputs (actions). If you control the inputs, by controlling that information, you can deceive. With that deception, you can change the outputs, resulting in different actions.

The reason deception takes a central role in manipulation is that it is important for parties you manipulate to believe their actions are furthering their own interests. Otherwise, they have no reason to take those actions. The objective of deception is to control information in such a way that the information they receive leads them to actions which further *your* interests.

Naturally, the main danger, with deception, is being discovered. For this reason, deception is often best avoided where possible and, when used, to be carefully controlled. An ideal deception would have minimal risk and maximum reward, with plausible deniability if found out. There is also the risk that lies can lead to further lies, in order to cover up the original deception; in this case, the risk swells while the reward remains the same and what might have seemed like a good idea at first can become a terrible decision.

Irrational Behavior

So far, in the fundamentals of manipulation, there has been an assumption based on the idea that parties act rationally. This is, broadly, a good assumption. What may seem like irrational behavior, to some people, is often a case of someone having unexpected goals.

It is of little interest, to your manipulation efforts, to assess the rationality of anyone's goals. While the volatility (liability to change) of those goals *is* of interest, the rationality of them is not. The important thing is to determine a person's goals via their actions and use those goals to predict, and manipulate, their future actions.

For example, a co-worker may seemingly be slacking off at work. They might not be doing any of the things required to achieve a promotion or make a good impression on your boss. Is their behavior irrational? It may seem so, but only if you assume their main goal is to advance their career. In actual fact, they may be looking for an easy ride, or focused on pursuing a love interest in the office. They might be more interested in their life outside of work and simply choose to earn some respite during work hours, so they can party it up all night again. In that sense, their actions are *not* irrational – they are simply geared towards achieving another goal. Is that goal rational? It hardly matters.

Irrational behavior is a cognitive failure to perform actions which help achieve one's goals.

The person in the previous example might have a stated goal to become head of sales in the next two years. However, that doesn't mean their real goals align. If someone is not consciously acting to achieve their goals, they can no longer be called their goals. Therefore the behavior is still not irrational.

Irrational behavior is more like a tick of the mind. It is a mistake, based on either a failure of human instinct or a lack of understanding. This is distinct from a lack of information, whereby a person can still make a mistake, however it is rational behavior based on the knowledge available to them.

A good example of irrational behavior is playing the lottery. Everyone knows how unlikely it is that your ticket will win, but many people play anyway, for the chance to win big. Something about human instinct encourages people to gamble for a reward.

The same approach is used by social media apps, who have discovered that an endlessly scrolling feed is the perfect way to tap into a twitch of human instinct. People scroll down and down the page, revealing new posts and content, each time gambling on whether something will be of interest or more drivel. It plays into the same risk/reward mechanisms as the lottery, manipulating human instinct to get more ad views, keep people using the apps for longer and increase their revenue.

Not everyone is as vulnerable to these methods of manipulation as others. The way rational behavior fits into this book's approach to manipulation is as part of observed behavior. Just because behavior is irrational, it doesn't mean that it is random; it can often be predicted. This makes it just as useful as rational behavior in understanding a person or party.

The important thing is to be aware of the possibility of irrational behavior, identify it and work it into your approach to manipulation.

Manifestations of Manipulation

Approaches to manipulation are ways of using of the above tools to affect the actions of others. It can vary from manipulating a single person, to manipulating a group, to manipulating an array of people within an organization in different ways.

Once again, you’re almost certainly already doing this to an extent. Examine some of the following approaches and consider how they might relate to your life already.

The Carrot and the Stick

This classic, and well known, approach to manipulation is the basic idea that good behavior is encouraged with a reward and bad behavior is discouraged with a punishment. It's common in families, schools, businesses, and basically all societies.

It's something humans do instinctively. It might even be called justice.

However, the carrot and the stick may also form part of your efforts to proliferate your own world view or improve your comfort. If a romantic partner cleans the bathroom and mows the lawn, you might give them a kiss and be more inclined to cook dinner; if they spend all day watching TV in their underwear, God protect them from your wrath.

At work, it's normal for a boss to incentivize workers with bonuses and, of course, there is the ever-present threat of losing your job should you prove unsatisfactory. But what about the carrot and the stick between peers? If a co-worker's actions somehow enhance your work or make it easier, isn't it natural to mention that and attempt to reinforce the behavior? What about if they create an extra problem for you, that you feel could have been avoided? That's likely to affect your relationship. You might give them the cold shoulder.

So it's something present in all relationships. However, learning to manipulate people, you might find that your actions don't always have the desired effect.

If you thank Jeff, because his work helped you out, the next time he's in a pinch, don't be surprised if he neglects to go the extra mile.

Imagine that Jeff was short on time and needed to decide between helping you out and helping Bill out, who gave him the cold shoulder last time Jeff failed to help him. Assuming that all is equal: the work for both you and Bill was the same and Jeff was under no additional obligation to complete either; that person has made a calculated decision: rather than disappointing someone else and receiving "the stick," they'll assign more time to their needs and forgo your "carrot."

What's just happened is you've unsuccessfully manipulated the situation. The attempt is there, by thanking Jeff, but you failed to get a result.

Breaking this down:

- Your power, or ability to help that person, was judged as less than the power of a third party to hinder them.
- Your persuasion failed because you didn't provide information that convinced that person of your power.
- The lack of deception in your approach resulted in more work for you.

There are a few possibilities. It is possible that Jeff simply responds more to the stick than the carrot. Despite the fact that he is obligated to complete the work for neither you nor Bill, he will do so primarily to avoid conflict, rather than to curry favor. An alternative is that he simply judged Bill as having more power than you – that means a greater ability to help Jeff achieve his goals. Perhaps Jeff predicts Bill has a higher career trajectory, more influence with the boss or greater social influence in the office.

This isn't to say that the stick works better than the carrot. You might find that Ted prefers to be rewarded and generally doesn't respond at all to negative feedback. The important thing is to find out what drives people, and discover their goals.

Emotional Manipulation

This is not wholly distinct from the carrot and the stick but much of manipulating people involves emotional intelligence.

There are a variety of ways in which people emotionally manipulate others. All of these, in some sense, work with the tools above to affect the actions of another. It might seem natural to conclude that the goal of emotional manipulation is to provoke irrational behavior – however, that's rarely the case. Emotional manipulation is much more likely to distort the truth, to the extent that someone's alters their path to achieve their goals, through a perceived change in reality.

Examine an approach to emotional manipulation called the guilt trip. The guilt trip involves trying to make someone feel worse about an action they have taken (or an action they have failed to take, which amounts to the same thing *i.e.* sitting around and *not* tidying your room is an action).

By guilt tripping someone, you are attempting to affect their emotional reaction to their error. The return is for that person to feel indebted. You are altering their perception of a situation, so that they will either: correct their behavior at the next opportunity or make amends for their error.

Here is a breakdown of the mechanics:

- They are concerned about their loss of reputation. If they develop a reputation as someone who cannot or will not help others to achieve their goals, the result will be a loss of power. Solving the issue by making amends is a way to salvage their reputation.
- You are persuading them of the severity of their error. As previously mentioned, failing deception, this requires you to either offer genuine new information, such as a previously unknown negative impact of their error – perhaps a financial cost to yourself or another – *or* have enough of their trust that they believe your opinion of opinion of events to be valid, causing them to reassess their own.
- Naturally, you can use deception to fabricate the above – inventing a detail that changes their perspective. An example

could be lying about an injury they caused to someone else unintentionally, playing up its severity. While you will be found out eventually, this might be an effective short term tactic to provoke a confession.

- The person who has committed the error is also affected by your power. If you have the ability to remedy the problem they have caused, they are likely to be submissive to your demands. Your power is the ability to help them achieve their goal of saving their reputation and naturally that increases, the greater they perceive their error to be.

Guilt tripping is far from the only form of emotional manipulation. It is difficult to draw the line between ethical and unethical emotional manipulation. For example, what constitutes guilt tripping as opposed to simply expressing disappointment? They are essentially the same. Likewise, what is the difference between intimidation and

Fortunately, this book is avoiding these issues for now but you'll find more information on the ethics of manipulation in the next chapter.

There are many terms for many different types of emotional manipulation. It is not necessary to memorize, or even learn, all of them. By understanding the mechanics of emotional manipulation, you can easily analyze and understand them as they arise. Here are a few examples:

- **Intimidation** – Provoking fear in a target, such that they may alter their strategy for achieving their goals. In particular, intimidation that carries a threat of violence can encourage a target to change their course of action in ensuring their own self-preservation (a fairly universal goal). Acting to appease their intimidator is a way for the target to survive, and becomes their future behavior.

Note that there is nothing irrational in the behavior of the target here. Emotional manipulation is not necessarily the provocation of irrational behavior. Bonus points if you recognized that this is hardly distinct from the "stick."

- **Seduction** – Manipulating a target by presenting them with an object of desire, and withholding it until the target performs an

action. The object may be the seducer or some other asset, like money. Scam emails from Nigerian princes work by seducing the target with the prospect of easy money.

Sexual seduction may include provoking irrational behavior, based on the promise of endorphins. An alternative way of viewing this is as a persuasion to manipulate the goals of others, prioritizing a sexual encounter above everything else.

Seduction revolves around power, as it is presenting and persuading the ability to offer somebody what they want. Bonus points if you recognized that this is hardly distinct from the "carrot."

- **Minimization** – This is the effort to reduce someone's perspective of an issue, or error you have caused. It may involve any manipulation tools to reduce the magnitude of the issue.

It normally involves persuasion and deception, highlighting or fabricating facts to demonstrate the lack of importance. It can also involve rationalization, which is explaining the reasons for one's actions in an attempt to justify them.

Although this bears no direct relation to power, observe how differently people respond to this behavior from someone who has perceived power, compared to someone who is perceived to lack it.

- **Blaming** – Passing the blame for an error onto someone else is a way to preserve your power, by protecting your reputation, using either persuasion or deception.

Note how easy it becomes to break down familiar actions, like blaming, using these three tools.

As well as passing the blame, creating blame can also be a useful smokescreen. Blaming a victim is a way of persuading a victim that their reputation is under threat, in order to manipulate a vulnerable person.

At this point, you may also recognize that blaming is closely linked to intimidation. There is damage or the threat of damage to someone's reputation, which can alter their actions by making them feel responsible or concerned that others will hold them responsible.

Charisma

It is difficult, but not impossible, to learn charisma. However, it is still crucial to mention charisma in this book, as it holds great power to manipulate others.

Charisma is the illusion of power. And the illusion of power is powerful.

Imagine a charismatic person. You're probably thinking of a charismatic speaker, who can hold an audience, and tell an anecdote. What good is persuasion, or even deception, if nobody pays attention to you? Charisma dictates much of what is referred to as natural magnetism.

And yet there are people in positions of great power who don't seem to be naturally charismatic at all. Politicians, performers and CEOs are possibly all charismatic figures but for every great speaker, there are a dozen fumbling, stuttering slouchers.

Charisma isn't everything but it can get you a long way. By creating the illusion of power, you can appear to have value to others around you. Although, deep down, everyone knows that charisma is just an illusion, it remains powerful all the same. Charismatic behavior coincides with the way talented, intelligent people are expected to behave. And it's likely there is some correlation to that.

It's safe to broadly divide charisma into two component parts, each fairly useless without the other:

- **Confidence** – Confidence is a natural result of competence, which is a natural result of ability and experience. It follows that, to appear confident will give the impression that you have either, or both, natural ability and experience *i.e.* useful traits which could help others achieve their goals.
- **Wit** – Wit is the ability to think quickly, on your feet. It is the equivalent of a somersault for the mind. It demonstrates mental agility, providing further evidence of your superior natural abilities and understanding. Even better if you're funny, too.

Imagine each of these traits without the other. Who is likely to make a greater fool of themselves than a bragging, witless fool. Anyone who possesses confidence, without wit, is destined to expose themselves as an idiot.

Equally useless is the silent genius. The wittiest remark in the world isn't going to increase anyone's perception of your power if you haven't got the confidence to share it.

It's possible to work on your charisma by improving your confidence naturally – that means accumulating understanding and developing skills. Try also watching charismatic people talk, watch what kind of comments they make and how they earn positive reactions from others. You should observe that charismatic people appear to find it easier to relate to an audience – a sign of emotional intelligence. Later chapters in this book cover analyzing others and you can use those skills to develop your charisma.

Charisma is not necessary for manipulation, but it offers a shortcut to power.

Ethical Considerations

You may wish to skip this chapter…

A joke, of course.

This book has already established a broad definition of manipulation, for practical reasons, which allows for a range of manipulative behaviors and does not include immoral behavior as a prerequisite. This chapter is a necessary exploration of ethics within the broad definition of manipulation provided.

There is a lot of grey area here. Ultimately, deciding what is right and wrong is up to each individual. This may vary depending on cultural values, laws, religious beliefs and a learned moral compass. What this chapter establishes is an understanding of the impact of manipulative behavior, in an effort to allow any readers to make informed judgments about their actions.

Deception

Reading this book, so far, you may already have run into examples of manipulation that you believe to be morally wrong. Congratulations on having a moral compass!

One example of a difficult area, ethically, is deception. For some, all forms of lying are wrong. This includes white lies and partial truths. If you are one of those people, you can still use the advice in this book but it's going to change the way you approach manipulation. Specifically, it your approach will avoid the use of deception and focus, instead, on power and persuasion.

For everyone else, you might need to decide how much and with what forms of deception you feel comfortable.

First, consider the issues with deception. Deceiving others can lead others into actions which act either against or without advancing their own interests. A side effect of manipulating them into acting in your own. Deceiving others could also be of benefit to them, tricking them into actions that will improve their health or career in the long term, but which they were not capable of doing themselves. Telling a child that their favorite super hero enjoys vegetables is an example of this. The deceit is intended to improve the child's diet, which could benefit their long-term health.

Deception can also have unintended consequences. In most cases, telling such a lie to a child is unlikely to end in disaster, but isn't it feasible that a child could discover the ruse, and develop distrust towards the deceiver. This could harm them by hardening their susceptibility to future manipulation in their interests or it could encourage lying tendencies in the child. There is no knowing, for certain, the ultimate impact of a given action.

Consider, also, the situation where deception takes place. It's perhaps expected behavior to try and completely deceive your counterpart, regarding your intentions, in a game of chess or checkers, a war or even in contract negotiation. However, many people would consider it immoral to hold even the smallest untruth from a future spouse.

You might even take the stance that deception, and any other behavior, is only a crime if you get caught. It's a potentially cynical world view but there's an argument to say that it's a dog-eat-dog world and if you're not willing to be

ruthless, someone else is going to do the same to you.

It’s not the place of this book to decide where you draw your lines in the sand. However, some advice would be to establish some ethical boundaries, such as “no lies that I have reason to believe will cause harm to another.” You might find this too stringent or too lenient, so define your own boundaries and if the moment arises where you recognize a chance to break that boundary, for your own potential gain, at least you will have the opportunity to confront your own morality, whether you decide to go ahead or not.

Abuse

With the reminder that this book is not telling you how to align your moral compass, it is necessary, still, to mention that most people consider abuse to be a bad thing. The issue is how to define abuse.

You have almost certainly heard the phrase “abuse of power.” Consider something that most people would place at the worst end of the spectrum, such as the sexual abuse of mentally handicapped minors. It is abuse on multiple levels, because the minor has a number of vulnerabilities. Significantly, parents and guardians of these individuals are in a position of trust, to protect these individuals. They have little defense against, and lack the judgment to understand the ways in which sexual abuse can impact their psychology. It’s an awful, sobering thought to establish the extreme end of the abuse spectrum.

At the other end of the spectrum, there may be more nuanced or controversial examples of what some people call abuse, such as ordering an extra portion of fries when charging a meal to the company account. It’s an unnecessary indulgence which allows the “abuser” to benefit excessively from the trust they have been given.

Taking this even further, it’s possible to draw into question the nature of business relationships. You might consider the idea of someone “sleeping their way to the top” to be dismissive. However, how is it possible to reconcile personal relationships where one person clearly has power over the other; for example a boss and an employee, with ideas of the abuse of power? Are these relationships possible without elements of abuse?

A person may naturally be drawn to their boss due to the power they hold, as has been established. At the same time, it may be impossible for a boss to enter into a non-abusive relationship, given the inherent vulnerability of their employee. Perhaps it is completely possible to separate work and pleasure but these situations are sticky, to say the least.

More pertinent to the times, it is possible to draw comparisons to the role of a casting director for Hollywood movies. Many people have said that it is inherently wrong for someone who has power over another, *i.e.* they can help their progress towards achieving their goals, to enter into a romantic relationship. Isn’t it the case that, in some of these instances, aspiring actors are

throwing themselves at people in positions of power? The implication, then, is that power brings responsibility. Certainly, that carries an element of truth in the eyes of many people and much of the media.

Once again, you will need to decide what constitutes abuse in your eyes. This may be defined by the potential victims of your actions, in which case you might not view a large corporation as a particularly tragic casualty, and order that extra basket of fries. Additional food for thought would be to consider what makes a person “vulnerable” and whether or not it is truly possible to decide that a person is “not vulnerable.” If you successfully manipulate another person then, surely, to some degree, they are vulnerable – if only to *your* cunning.

Honor

Navigating all of these ethical issues may, to some degree, force you to rely on a code of honor. This might be dictated by a culture, or a creed. It may be created by yourself or your peers. It may even be part of a commitment made to uphold a certain level of integrity – as is common among reputable media outlets.

This can help you to make ethical decisions, by placing boundaries for you. However, it’s rare that, when push comes to shove, a code of honor will actually stop you from taking an action outside of its bounds. That is up you alone.

The Ends Vs The Means

One alternative to establishing clear ethical boundaries is to judge each case completely on its merits. In this instance, there is more flexibility. In particular, you may decide that any action can be justified, if the result is positive enough to outweigh the means of achieving it.

There is a further issue, which even the most flexible moral gymnasts ought to consider. Even if the ends justify the means, could those ends be achieved with less wrongdoing?

Once again, it is not the place of the book to enforce a specific moral code. However, even if your approach to ethics, in manipulation, is flexible, would you lose anything by defining boundaries anyway? At least in that case, you can recognize when you cross those boundaries, and it gives you a prompt to address and justify your reasons for doing so.

Intent and Unscrupulousness

This book has already partly addressed the issue of intent in manipulation. Consider the child who screams; young children make a lot of decisions based on emotion and instinct. The intent may not be to manipulate, but the manipulation is still present.

If you have spent time around children, you may know that, when a child hurts themselves, there is a pause before their reaction. In many cases, they will look to their parent. If the parent's reaction is shock, they may become unsettled and start to cry; if the parent's reaction is to remain calm, often the child will remain calm themselves.

They are learning to navigate the world and their influence within it. It is difficult to assign blame to the child for manipulative behavior, even when you would find such behavior to be unimpressive or undesirable in an adult.

On the subject of adults, you may also differentiate between unscrupulousness (willful disregard for morals or laws that stand in the way of one's goals) and a complete lack of knowledge of those boundaries. Although both are potentially ethical breaches, the latter indicates a lack of responsibility, while the former is an extreme form of egoism – total self-interest.

In practice, this shouldn't be a choice you're able to make. Effective manipulation should involve an analysis of your actions and, at the very least, a reasonable estimate of their results. That means you'll already have the inform

Additionally making moral decisions, based on information and consideration, will allow you to rest in the knowledge that you took responsibility for your decision and actively understood the consequences. It could prevent you from making a decision you live to regret.

The Law

Despite the non-committal nature of this chapter, there is one aspect against which this book advises you completely. That is breaking the law. Under no circumstances is it recommended that you break the law and, if you suspect that you are engaging in criminal activity, including fraud or another form of illegal deception-based manipulation, you are advised to investigate the law thoroughly and avoid any wrongdoing.

Ending up in jail is almost certainly not a way to achieve your goals and the best way to avoid jail is to ***not break the law***.

Methodology

This chapter is where things get really practical. In this chapter, you will learn to apply the ideas established in previous chapters and create an effective strategy for manipulation.

The core of developing an effective manipulation strategy revolves around influencing others to perform actions which further your goals.

Step 1 – Define Your Goal(s)

This is the focus of your manipulation strategy. Without this, you run the risk of manipulating people aimlessly. While diversion *can* be part of an effective manipulation strategy, it should be done deliberately, rather than at random.

One important consideration, regarding your goals, is to determine if they are something you really want to achieve. It's no good saying that your goal is to rule the world, if you aren't willing to put in the effort – who needs that kind of pressure, anyway?

It's also better to define goals, to which there is already a clear path. You may have larger goals, such as becoming the CEO of a Fortune 500 company – however unless you already have a clear idea of your path to that goal, it's probably better to start smaller. Take that goal, and break it down. The first thing you might need is managerial experience.

Give yourself a goal of reaching a managerial position in your company, and have at least 50 people to you, either directly or via the chain of command. Break that down even further, if you need to, and set your first goal as becoming the leader of your team.

Career success isn't the only type of goal this methodology works for. You might set a goal to carve a niche at work which gives you more free time and allows you to work with less stress. You might set a goal to find a loving spouse. The goal itself doesn't matter, as long as you really want it.

Don't forget to set a date on your goal as well. It doesn't matter how you arrive at your estimate – even if you make simple guess – you can always revise it later based on improved information. What a date gives you is a restraint, encouraging you to think creatively in order to accelerate your plans.

Now take a note of all your goals, long-term and short-term, big and small, and order them in terms of immediacy.

Remind yourself of your goals every single day.

In doing so, you are focusing your brain on a task. Think of a time when achieved highly at work, school or college. Think about what it took to achieve something that made you proud. Was it working a moderate amount of hours or did it involve going the extra mile? Were you thinking about the project night

and day, running it through in your head before you went to sleep and structuring it in your mind? Of course you were. That's what made the difference.

By focusing your brain on a task, you dedicated all your resources to achieving highly. The more attention you dedicated to manipulation, the more you'll be able to accomplish and the better you'll succeed at it.

Oh and keep your goals a secret from everyone for now, naturally.

Step 2 – Map Out Your Paths to Success

Now that you have your goals, and you've broken them down sufficiently, it should be fairly easy to find a path to success. If your goal is a promotion, you'll need a boss to promote you. If your goal is finding a loving spouse, you'll need to find someone who's going to provide that and for them to agree to marriage.

Consider alternate paths to success as well. For instance, if you want to take your boss' position, one path might be for them to get fired, leaving a vacancy for you. In another situation, they could be promoted, leaving a spot open.

Map out as many paths as you can and consider them all possibilities for now.

Once you've done that, it's time to establish the parties involved. Who would be in charge of the decision-making process for your promotion? Who are your potential rivals? How does information flow between these people?

In the case of achieving a promotion, your manipulation strategy should be to make the people, who have the power to promote you, *want* to do so. You've seen the movie *Inception*, right? Unfortunately hacking into someone's dreams isn't an option.

In order to manipulate *your* target, you need to start understanding their goals and behavior.

Step 3 – Gather Information

This book's final chapters will directly address analyzing people, including yourself. For now, it is enough to include it as part of your manipulation strategy.

Consider the goals of the people whom you need to influence – those who will decide whether or not you are promoted. Map out all of their actions, starting from now and as much of their previous behavior as possible. Look for patterns and attempt to relate each of their actions to what you perceive as their goals. Then look for ways in which they don't align and reassess their goals to see pinpoint what matches.

Make an assessment of your own assets. Include hard facts, such as your time at a company, your currently salary and your qualifications, as well as soft skills, such as charisma and persuasion.

Profile all the parties involved, including those who have the power to promote you, your rivals and anyone in orbit of your path to success. Include their goals and try to record their actions, spotting patterns and connecting them to their goals. Keep organized notes of all of this information and conceal it from *everyone*.

The aim here is to give your brain as much information as possible. Once again, imagine your brain as a machine. It has the best chance of producing the correct outputs (actions) if it has access to the best inputs (information) and the better you can objectively organize this information, the easier it will be to make smart decisions, rather than subjective decisions based on instinct.

After a while, say a few days, you should start to build a picture. Take more time if you feel like you need it. However, you don't need to have a perfect understanding of the situation to begin the next stage of information gathering, which is to identify key figures among those who you are profiling and start doing the same thing for people related to *their* goals. In the case of those who have the power to promote you, this may very well be the people who have the power to promote *them*.

Going a step further is going to give you an even deeper understanding of the way that these people operate, what drives them and what is likely to impact their decisions.

You will continue gathering information indefinitely, even as you begin manipulating others. Make it a habit and you will get better at identifying the goals and behavioral patterns of others faster and more accurately.

Focus on understanding where power lies and how the parties involved reach their decisions – try to identify what provokes them to take certain actions. Relate this back to their own goals.

Step 4 – Identify Opportunities and Threats

This is where it's time to use your brain. You should be thinking about your goals every day by now and developing a deeper understanding of the mechanics of your situation.

Opportunities

Remember the goal you have set for yourself. And remember your essential aim is to want the parties in charge of your promotion to want to promote you. What have you learned about their goals? Take a typical scenario and say that they want to achieve good figures – they want to improve the efficiency of your team by increasing its profits.

Relate what you have learned about the parties in orbit of your goals back to the paths you mapped out. Start using that knowledge to assess the likelihood success in each case. Is it more likely that your current team leader will be fired or promoted? Is there another opportunity for you to reach the same tier of management elsewhere, within or even outside the company? Weigh the options against one another.

Say you have reason to believe that your current team leader is underperforming, and you expect them to be fired rather than promoted. In this instance, you need to be careful of the timing. The opportunity is presenting itself and when it arises, you need to be in pole position.

What if you're in pole position right now? Then it's time to get your team leader fired as soon as possible.

Relate this to the three main tools of manipulation identified in earlier chapters:

- Power – As the candidate in pole position, you are perceived to have the most power to help your *potential* new bosses (those who would promote you) to achieve their goals. Likewise, you have also identified that your current boss, your team-leader, is facing the chop. This is, almost certainly, because they are perceived to *lack* the power to help their immediate superiors achieve their goals.

However, they haven't been fired yet. This might be for a number of reasons. Perhaps they haven't had enough opportunity to prove

themselves. Perhaps their superiors aren't certain about you as a replacement.

- Persuasion – Forget marching up to those with the power to promote you and giving an epic speech about why you're the perfect candidate to be the next team-leader. This isn't a Hollywood movie. More to the point, the world won't simply bend to your knees because you ask it to.
- Deception – What you *can* do is act to control the flow of information that reaches your boss' superiors. The aim, in this instance, is to decrease their perception of your boss' power and get your boss fired more quickly.

The ways in which you could achieve this are too many to list. How close are you to these people, whom you need to influence? Who has their ear and what makes them tick? Perhaps another team-leader, reliant on the actions of your team, is likely to complain about your boss if your team fails to deliver.

Now think: who has *their* ear? Possibly someone on their team. Possibly someone with whom you're on talking terms. Now you have an opportunity, sufficiently distanced from yourself, to indirectly influence the people directly above your boss.

Recapping, this refers to someone, of roughly your level, working for a team, roughly the same level as your own, which is dependent on the actions of your team. Immediately begin profiling this person, their goals and their actions.

Bear in mind, this is a hypothetical example, but it gives you the idea of the kind of person you might stand to gain by influencing. You will have to analyze your own situation and form a strategy based on these ideas.

Note that so much of what goes into effective manipulation is deciding *who* to manipulate. You are likely to be manipulating everyone at once, to some degree. Later chapters will give you advice on how to project power using body language and speech, giving you increased opportunities for manipulation in general. Right now, you are forming a strategy for manipulating a specific situation through extraordinary means.

Threats

A threat, in this instance, is any rival who has the potential to be promoted ahead of you. An additional threat is your boss recovering their reputation (perceived power) and getting out of the danger-zone. Consider anything, which can serve to disrupt your path to success, as a potential threat.

Look for threats constantly and use the same principles to thwart them. Specifically, act covertly to reduce the power of any parties which threaten to disrupt your plans.

Step 5 – Take Action

Leaving threats aside, refocus on the current example. Here, an opportunity has presented itself to create a deception. It may well be the case that you have a close relationship with the person identified to start the flow information, in which case it might be possible to conspire. If your boss is truly useless, and your target's team is truly dependent on an improvement in your team's performance, *and* your target aims to see that happen, you could *theoretically* agree to work together, in order to perpetuate some information that will damage the reputation of your boss.

But take a moment to look at some of the risks:

- Your collaborator is another person who can be discovered and the conspiracy could come back to you.
- You have revealed to another person that you wish to conspire. This will have an effect on their opinion of you, and your trustworthiness.
- Your collaborator may change their mind, in which case you will have sabotaged your chance to deceive them by revealing your goals.
- Your collaborator may alter the plan to suit their own goals and compromise your strategy.

With deception, you only run the risk of being found out yourself and it's quite possible to attempt a deception with plausible deniability.

For the purposes of this example, say you are on friendly terms with this person and may eat lunch or take coffee with them roughly once a week. Show an active interest by asking them questions. Mix in questions about their work with a normal, personal interest in the person. Try to focus on pursuing lines of conversation about which they're willing to talk. There is a good chance this will relate to their interests, which will relate to their goals.

Look for something in their goals which is affected by your boss' actions. Say their team handles delivery, while your team handles production. This is a simple paradigm, given that the example relies on their team's dependence on yours. Establish the issues facing delivery and analyze elements of your boss'

behavior which could be revealed, in order for your target to arrive at the conclusion your boss is bad news. This could be a tendency to ignore the demands of shipping when forming a production schedule.

It's important not to do this at a time when your target is specifically talking about their issues. You should also reveal the information in such a way that does not arouse suspicion. For example, when a natural opportunity arises, you might explain the way your boss scheduled production, which clearly illustrates the absence of shipping.

At this point, the example has reached such a degree of specificity, that it is almost certainly impossible to directly relate to your circumstances. You will always need to look for opportunities specific to your own situation when engaging in manipulation. This will require you to act ingeniously, by giving yourself as much information as possible.

You have now planted the seed of an idea in your target's head. Your boss is having a negative impact on your target's professional success due to their methods. In the eyes of your target, the goals of your boss fail to align with their own. They must go. You have recruited someone to do your bidding, without arousing suspicion. You have maintained a normal co-worker relationship but achieved a deception by actively controlling the flow of information to those who have power over your future.

If all goes according to plan, the next time your co-worker falls behind in their work or struggles to make a deadline, they'll know exactly who to blame. Their team leader will relay this information to their superiors and your boss will become even more of a problem than before, edging closer to their professional doom.

Step 6 – Learn and Improve

Unfortunately, your plan has every chance of failure. It might be that your boss manages production in the way they do for an important reason – one which might be recognized by their superiors. In that case, it could even backfire. But at least you weren't rumbled. Take note from this manipulation attempt and use it to inform your future efforts.

There is no way to predict the future perfectly but looking at the past is the best way to get an approximation. Use the ideas of this methodology to develop your own strategies and manipulate the world around you for your own ends.

Analysis

This chapter relates back to aspects of the previous chapter on the methodology of manipulation.

By learning methods of analysis, you can develop a better understanding of the parties which have power to help you achieve, or prevent you from achieving, your goals. A large part of this is practice – practice observing behaviors and then try to predict actions based on patterns you have observed. Test your accuracy in this regard, reflect on why you failed to make an accurate prediction and then try to remedy that in future. You will naturally improve with time.

Self-Analysis

An excellent way to begin understanding the actions, and determining the goals, of others is to start analyzing yourself. Keep a note of your actions and observe yourself as if you were observing a third party. Understand why you took an action and, in particular, whether it helped or hindered your efforts to achieve your goals.

What you are trying to do is achieve objectivity, which you can use to make good decisions regarding your own future. Note that the terminology used here is “good” decisions. You may already be making rational decisions but that does not mean they are necessarily “good.”

You could be making those rational decisions based on your ill-informed knowledge of what type of behavior works in your favor and what type of actions work against you. By improving your knowledge, and gaining perspective through objectivity, you can make *better* decisions.

Analyze, too, your instincts. Consider your instinctive reaction to a situation. What provokes an impulse in you to become emotional? What provokes you to make clearly *irrational* decisions – *i.e.* taking actions which offer you no value at all, yet you take them all the same.

With self-analysis, you can recognize the occasions a decision has a negative effect on your power. When people see you out of control, for example, they will judge you to be a less reliable option for assistance in achieving their goals, reducing your perceived power. The natural conclusion, and lesson to learn, is that controlling your immediate reaction is almost always the correct choice. Do not act until you can truly understand a situation and form an appropriate strategy to turn it in your favor.

Identifying these impulsive instincts will also help you to discover the goals of others. Impulsive actions, taken by others, offer insight into their goals. People are most likely to become provoked when their power or the likelihood of achieving their goals is under threat. Use your self-analysis to empathize with people in these moments, place yourself in their shoes and understand what drives them.

Analyzing Others

Along with empathy, using your self-analysis and lived experience to place yourself in the shoes of others, you can also recognize the behavioral patterns of other objectively.

The introduction to this chapter offers a nice summary. Here is an opportunity to present the process of analyzing others in a more systematic manner:

1. Begin by observing and recording every action that a person takes. Provide yourself with as much data as possible. Include every unusual mood, action, reaction and impulse.
2. Hypothesize obvious and suspected goals which that person many possess.
3. Test their actions in relation to these goals. Try to understand if the person is acting to achieve these goals, in which case your hypothesized goals are correct, or if the actions and your hypothesized goals fail to align, in which case you may need to consider that the person is pursuing alternative goals.
4. Predict the actions of a person, based on their goals and the behavioral patterns (patterns in the actions they take) you observe. Specifically, when something unusual occurs, try to predict how they will react. Analyze your success and failures in prediction. Where you fail, try to understand why the person reacted as they did, why you failed to predict that and use it to inform your future predictions.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 ad infinitum, until you can accurately predict the behavior of that person.

With this ability to predict the reaction of a person to a given event, it only requires your creativity to reverse-engineer an event based on the reaction you wish to produce. The event might be as simple and innocent as mentioning a certain topic of conversation, revealing a piece of information or thanking them for some work they’ve done.

Cold Reading

Cold reading is the practice of analyzing a person on a first meeting, or even a first glance. This is a particularly useful skill because it allows you to manipulate someone even in a single meeting. If you can analyze someone in a short space of time, to the extent where you can predict their reactions to a stimulus, you only need to provide that stimulus in order to achieve the desired result.

Everyone already cold reads, to a degree. Using stereotypes, it is common and perfectly normal to form an opinion of someone based on their appearance, including the clothes they wear, the look on their face, the shape and size of their body, their accent, and even their ethnicity. The problem is that cold reading tends to be fairly inaccurate. You cannot guarantee anything about a person based simply on their appearance and people are liable to surprise you.

Effective cold reading is going to take practice and data. Make predictions about new people you meet, memorize them or quickly record them, if you have an opportunity, and then test them as you find out more about a person. Relate your findings back to your first impressions of someone and consider if there was anything you *could* have spotted, which might have given it away.

Body Language

Body language is useful as both a source of information, and an approach to manipulation. It can form a part of both deception *and* persuasion.

You have probably heard quotes like “body language makes up 55% of all communication,” before. Although the number, “55%,” is actually pretty useless, the message remains clear that body language is an important part of the way people communicate to one another.

Considering the fact that body language is so important, it’s no surprise that everyone is able to read body language and react to it, to some degree. On a sub-conscious level, you can probably already understand when someone disagrees with what you are saying, or is interested, or just wants to stop talking to you altogether. These cues are intended to be understood – without that, there would be no point to their existence.

However, there are important ways to read the body language of others, which can help you to analyze their intentions, even when they are attempting to deceive you.

Facial Expressions

It’s a famous poker trope that everyone has a particular behavior which they exhibit when “bluffing,” a form of deception intended to lead opponent players to believe they have a stronger hand than they actually do. This is known as a “tell.”

While there is some truth to this, and you may be able to spot giveaway signs to recognize when a person is lying. However, this will be limited in accuracy and, particularly in the poker, you might fall prey to a deception, in which someone is deliberately putting on a tell, in order to throw you off the scent.

In reality, facial expressions tend to be extremely unreliable when determining if someone is telling the truth or not. They are easy to fake and don’t offer much in the way of help when it comes to analyzing others.

However, as a tool for manipulation, facial expressions happen to be somewhat useful. One general tip is to give people a big eyebrow raise and light up your face with interest upon greeting people. Most people greet one another with stern professionalism – it’s such an easy tip but raising your eyebrows and smiling at someone can create a lasting impression. There’s no need to be obsequious; don’t coo or gaze. Just show comfort, confidence and a project a genuinely positive reaction from seeing someone.

The power of positivity indicates to others that you have a willingness to be constructive and helpful to others. People crave the influence of positive people, as a positive attitude breeds achievement.

Reading Body Language

So, if the face is limited in reading the non-verbal communicative cues of a person, where should you look? The answer happens to be relatively simple: the feet.

Most people reflect their desire and their attention by pointing their feet. If you sense something off about a conversation, and get the feeling someone would like to be somewhere else, glance at their feet and, if they're pointing towards the door, there's your clincher.

Naturally, you don't want to spend all your time staring at someone's feet. But take a glance and use their position to recognize whether someone wants to be in the conversation or not. If they're pointing right at you, they're likely to be a lot more receptive to what you're saying.

If they're pointing away from you, it's possible you might as well be talking to a brick wall. Now, the reason for that can vary. It doesn't necessarily mean they don't like you; they might just be late for another appointment or have other things on their mind. You need to use your learned analysis and incorporate body language to form a complete picture.

Thank you for reading. You are now armed with powerful techniques that you can use in many different ways. Wield this knowledge wisely and judiciously.

Sincerely,

Arthur Horn

LEGAL NOTICE

Copyright (c) 2019 Arthur Horn.

All rights are reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced or duplicated using any form whether mechanical, electronic, or otherwise. No portion of this book may be transmitted, stored in a retrieval database, or otherwise made available in any manner whether public or private unless specific permission is granted by the publisher. Vector illustration credit: vecteezy.com This book does not offer advice, but merely provides information. The author offers no advice whether medical, financial, legal, or otherwise, nor does the author encourage any person to pursue any specific course of action discussed in this book. This book is not a substitute for professional advice. The reader accepts complete and sole responsibility for the manner in which this book and its contents are used. The publisher and the author will not be held liable for any damages caused.